



## Missouri State University restores MFA Mill to Jordan Valley Innovation Center

In the development of the City of Springfield's *A Vision for Jordan Valley*, the citizens of Springfield expressed their interest in "The historic mills that line the Jordan Creek valley..." that offer a unique set of landmark structures. These structures, including the Former MFA Mill, pronounce the location of Jordan Valley from a distance and celebrate the importance of Springfield's culture and history.

The Missouri Farmers Association (MFA) milling facility presented the rural Midwest with supplies that helped feed the United States from the 1920s to the turn of the century. Seven years after the mill ceased operations, the MFA building was brought back to life as Missouri State University's Jordan Valley Innovation Center (JVIC). With the help of Congressman Roy Blunt, the City of Springfield acquired the mill in 2002 for \$100,000, as a Brownfield project in conjunction with a center-city revitalization plan. The City planned to use the land as part of the Jordan Valley Park project, which would have created an outdoor amphitheater and additional green space. In 2005, however, Missouri State University approached the City about buying the land as part of its JVIC project. After environmental assessments, remediation, and Missouri State University's acquisition of the property from the City for \$1, a ground breaking ceremony took place at the mill's foundation November 29, 2005.



Before, as the MFA Mill

In 2002, Phase I and II assessments were performed on the property. The Phase I assessment identified a number of RECs, including the fumigants used in grain operations, water accumulating in the basement from an unknown source, and the proximity of the property to the Solid States Circuits site, historically a electronic circuit board manufacturer whose property had also been used as a dry cleaners, newspaper company, and car barn, among others, along with an identified UST. In



Ribbon cutting ceremony, May 30, 2007

the assessor's opinion the UST on the property represented a de minimis condition, (a condition that generally does not present material risk of harm to public health or the environment and that generally would not be the subject of an enforcement action if brought to the attention of appropriate governmental agencies). The Phase I recommended a subsurface Phase II assessment, which identified tract III as containing soils with dieldrin migration to groundwater levels that exceeded MDNR's standards. The Phase II recommended further soil evaluation in tract III, as well as the disposal of grain materials from the silos into an off-site location. Remediation was performed on the property to ensure the soil's dieldrin levels were within MDNR standards. A DNR "no further action" letter was received February 2003 for the successful removal of the hazardous substances, and the UST was removed in October 2004, allowing for the development of JVIC.

City of Springfield, MO Department of Planning & Development. 840 N. Boonville Ave. 65801.

[www.springfieldmo.gov/brownfields](http://www.springfieldmo.gov/brownfields)

(417) 864-1031

In December 2006, the Missouri State University Board of Governors voted to name the center in honor of US Representative Roy Blunt, recognizing his support and leadership in providing federal funding for the facility. JVIC opened its doors May 30, 2007, thanks to more than \$22 million in Federal, State, and private funds for construction and renovation. JVIC boasts \$50 million in equipment and machinery, seven senior corporate affiliates, and has received \$60 million in research project funding. JVIC has employed over 85 individuals upon its opening. Because of this redevelopment, economic development opportunities have increased within the area.

“This project is a tremendous example of turning a liability into an opportunity for the Springfield region,” states Allen Kunkel, Associate Vice President for Economic Development. “Several visionary leaders took a risk in renovating the former MFA Feed Mill into a state-of-the-art research facility and attracting corporate partners to Springfield. This facility has returned well over \$100 million on a \$100,001 investment, and has become the anchor for a much larger vision for IDEA Commons. The project significantly increases the Springfield region’s presence in technology based economic development, and will have long-term economic impact on the region.”

The Jordan Valley Innovation Center operates under a mission of “product development for our corporate partners and interdisciplinary educational experiences for our students.” There are three individual operating centers within JVIC, all dedicated to a mission of product development – the Center for Applied Science and Engineering (CASE), the Center for Biomedical and Life Science (CBLS), and Springfield Innovation, Inc (SI2). The established research background of JVIC, and the



**Jordan Valley Innovation Center**

unique position it has on intellectual property has managed to attract exceptional companies to create a collaborative research environment. Students work side by side with corporate scientists and engineers, which gives Springfield the opportunity to retain technology-oriented students after graduation – they can find a position with JVIC, a corporate partner, or another industry. JVICs educational philosophy allows students studying business, chemistry, engineering, physics, industrial management, and material science to work together on research projects. This applied learning experience serves the technical and commercial needs of the industry, while preparing students for a technology based career.

Upon completion of the renovation of the complex, JVIC will be made up of four separate buildings, and cover approximately 75,000 square feet. The capabilities of the center include applied research in nanotechnology, bio-materials, advanced technologies, genomics/proteomics, bio-systems, software engineering and medical material device and instrument technologies. What was once a dilapidated MFA Feed Mill in downtown Springfield, JVIC is now the home of leading-edge research and state-of-the-art technology. In the 2005-2006 fiscal years, Missouri State received more than \$12 million from the Department of Defense for Phase I of the renovation, which created the current building with its advanced research and development laboratories. The 2007 fiscal year Department of Defense budget allowed for \$2.6 million for Phase II of the redevelopment, an advanced manufacturing and rapid prototyping facility. Phase IIa is in the process of being completed with assistance from the State of Missouri through \$5 million in Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative funding. Phase III, yet to be funded, will construct a two story Advanced Carbon Devices Manufacturing and Processing Laboratory on the site where a fifth building sits today.

City of Springfield, MO Department of Planning & Development. 840 N. Boonville Ave. 65801.

[www.springfieldmo.gov/brownfields](http://www.springfieldmo.gov/brownfields)

(417) 864-1031